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ABSTRACT

A comparison of the current television series "Miami Vice" with the "film noir" genre of American movies from the forties and fifties reveals many similar elements, such as visual style, mood, theme, and sensibility. "Miami Vice" is set in a large city whose art deco architecture provides an ironic contrast to noir's pessimistic themes. Film noir's techniques emphasize loss, nostalgia, lack of clear priorities and insecurity, and then submerge these self-doubts in mannerism and style. Two selected episodes of "Miami Vice" deal specifically with the criminal "double," a motif often used in later "film noir." One critic has suggested that the core dilemma of the TV show is whether or not the police officers will surrender themselves to the world of vice. In one episode in which the character of Crockett is tracking a cat burglar, the story makes extensive use of doubles linking the detective with both a burglar and a psychotic policeman who is also pursuing the burglar. The climax brings the noir, double, and Jungian psychology themes together. A camera shot frames Crockett with his double, and in the next scene a stark close-up of the criminal's face becomes Crockett's face as the criminal looks away. When the burglar hurls something forward, breaking a mirror, Crockett awakens from what seems to be a dream. The popular television series, "Miami Vice," appears to be continuing the "film noir" tradition into the eighties. References and 18 figures (frames from the television series illustrating the points discussed) are attached. (NKA)

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Eighties' Film Noir: An Analysis of the Use of the "Double" in Miami Vice's Second and Third Seasons

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Abstract

Critics and scholars have approached Miami Vice as a contemporary example of film noir. The show's themes, characters, style, and texture suggest a television equivalent to the dark American crime films of the forties and fifties. Through analysis of the visual and verbal text, this paper investigates the use of the "double" - a character's reverse image, often mirroring his evil side - in Miami Vice's second and third season.

Eighties' Film Noir: An Analysis of the Use of the "Double" in Miami Vice's Second and Third Seasons

What is film noir ? Critics have found the term elusive. Most agree that it has a certain kind of narrative structure. What complicates the definition is that it must also include more subjective elements such as visual style, mood, theme, and sensibliity. Two films may be similarly plotted, only one may be noir. For this reason, more recent writers such as Schrader (1972), Place (1978), Silver and Ward (1979), and Tuska (1984) do not consider film noir as a genre. Place and Tuska argue that it is a movement. "A movement among individual filmmakers," according to Tuska, "which involved similar techniques to make anti-generic statements." (p. 152)

Stylistically, film noir makes use of a number of patterns; night scenes, oblique lines, bizarre camera angles, compositional tension, and extensive use of shadows. (Schrader, p. 283) Thematically, noir suggests the unheroic nature of human beings, the pervasiveness of evil and corruption, paranoia and claustrophobia. The noir hero is trapped in all of this, alienated yet still trying to get meaning from a senseless world. (Place, p. 41)

The French coined the term "film noir" and were the first to write about it. Observing American films for the first time after World War II, French critics found them to be darker, bleaker, and more cynical than the pre-war films. Particularly dark were the crime melodramas. (Schrader, p. 278)

Instead of the larger-than-life gangster fighting to survive in a capitalist jungle, we had the ordinary detective/cop/insurance agent attempting to make some sense out of a dark and corrupt world. The thirties' crime films with their emphasis on hard work and determination reaffirmed the system; the noir films of the forties and fifties would raise questions not only about the system but also about the larger society.

Noir's film roots are usually traced back to the German and Eastern European directors and cinematographers, trained at Germany's UFA Studio during the twenties and thirties, who eventually fled to America and brought with them the controlled lighting and other artificial studio techniques characteristic of German Expressionism. (Cook, 1981, p. 405) Noir's literary roots came from the hard-boiled detective writers of the twenties, thirties, and forties. For Daly, Hammett, Chandler, Cain, McCoy, and O'Hara, crime was "a pervasive social force which permeated the urban environment and virtually all of its inhabitants." (Schatz, 1981, p. 125)

Double Indemnity (1944) is often cited as the first fully realized noir film. (Some critics argue for earlier films: Tuska cites Stranger on the Train (1940), Citizen Kane (1941), and I Wake Up Screaming (1942). Schatz would include Murder My Sweet (1944). Almost all note the importance of The Maltese Falcon (1941) in noir's development.) The success of Double Indemnity and Murder My Sweet brought imitators and by the late forties, cynicism and a sense of doom could be found in almost all films regardless of their genre. (Cook, p. 406)

Additionally, American film developed a psychological edge. Freudian theory and jargon had become a part of the culture - the films reflected this acceptance:

> What is remarkable about the 1940s movies is how much they shifted the focus of screen drama from an outer to an inner world. In Depression movies, horrible threats came from alien sources, from vampires and monsters and giant jungle beasts; by the 1940s, horror lay close to home, in the veiled malevolence of trusted intimates, in one's own innermost thoughts. (Sklar, 1975, p. 255)

The early fifties would take this one step further with the psychotic and psychopath becoming the central figure. "The noir hero," according to Schrader, "seemingly under the weight of ten years of despair started to go bananas." (p. 286) The mid-fifties produced very few film noirs. Television (Schrader, p. 287), technical innovations such as color, wide screen, and stereophonic sound (Clarens, 1980, p. 230), and the witchhunts (Cook, p. 407) all contributed to noir's decline. Television would make the detective/cop show a staple of prime time but noir elements would seldom be a part of these melodramas. Television's lighting needs along with the medium's difficulty with moral ambiguity, combined with the sponsor's control of content, would make film noir's bleak vision an unlikely candidate for commercial television.

While noir elements could be found in occasional films, the sixties produced very few film noirs. (Silver and Ward, for example, list eleven films for the 1960's. Their list for just one year, 1951, contains 31 films. (p. 335-336)) The early seventies saw a renewed critical and film interest in noir: Dirty Harry (1971), The French Connection (1971), The Long Goodbye (1973), and Chinatown (1974) were particularly noteworthy. The renewed

interest in film noir seemed to culminate with Taxi Driver (1976). Paul Schrader, who earlier in the decade had helped to rekindle the critical interest in noir, wrote the screenplay. The character of Travis Bickel further illustrates Schrader's earlier point about the final phase of noir - when the hero "goes bananas." Kolker (1980) notes the connection:

> He is the climactic noir figure, much more isolated and very much madder than his forebears. No cause is given for him, no understanding allowed; he stands formed by his own loneliness and trapped by his own isolation, his actions and reactions explicable only through those actions and reactions. (p. 227)

The eighties would see occasional interest in noir with remakes (The Postman Always Rings Twice, 1981), copies (Body Heat, 1981), courtroom dramas (The Verdict, 1982), traditional detectives (Tightrope, 1984), and even spoofs (Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid, 1982), but it would be television, ironically, that would push noir in new directions.

The police or private detective melodrama has long been a prime-time television fixture. Dragnet and the early detective shows established a format that would change very little over the years. Crime was solvable - usually within one episode. By the show's end, the criminal was safely behind bars and order had been restored. Joe Friday and his detective counterparts were dedicated, honest, and hard-working. They played by rules they seldom doubted and usually got their man alive. The nightly news, with its stories of riots, disrespect for the law, and rising crime rates might provide some dissonance, but by eleven PM order would once more be re-established. Film, with its ability to make money by catering to more specialized audience, would have Clint Eastwood or Charles Bronson

get revenge outside the law. Television cops, with few exceptions (occasionally Baretta or Kojak might step into a grey area), played within the rules. The characters, the need of narrative closure, and the restoration of order positioned most television crime shows far away from film noir with its amoral protagonist and his nihilistic world.

Breaking away from most of this was Hill Street Blues. Piloted in 1980, the series started slowly. Critics, word-of-mouth, and awards eventually helped it build a loyal audience. While it was not quite noir, it was also not Adam 12 or Police Woman. The plot was complicated and the characters were complex - characters actually changed. Its look was quite different for television. Location and nighttime shooting, hand-held cameras, and dimmed lighting gave it a tough, gritty, realistic texture. Steve Bochco, originator and co-producer explained the need for this particular style: "This show had to be grim, gritty, and rude if it was going to accurately capture the police mentality." (Gitlin, 1985, p. 281) At times, Hill Street could be as bleak as a noir thriller. However, unlike noir, its despair would be temporarily alleviated by some small amount of hope - a thankful senior citizen, an appreciative child, a loving spouse. Additionally, noir characters are loners; Hill Street's are connected: "Characters would brush past each other, reach over each other's shoulders, break into each other's conversations, suggesting that its people depend on each other, crisis is everyday, no man or woman is an island." (Gitlin, p. 292) Hill Street's protagonist, Captain Furillo, is also a departure from the traditional police captain. Despite his

position, he like the noir protagonist, is an outsider. The inside is the amoral beauracracy and politics of police and city government ("downtown"); everything that Chief of Police Daniels epitomizes. While "downtown" may not necessarily be corrupt, as it tends to be in noir films, its need for political expediency does not make it moral either. (In seventies' films the system was almost always corrupt - an excuse the cop/detective would use to justify his outside-the-law actions.) Furillo is far more moral than the system he defends, his personal integrity anchors the show. Combining this with his humanity and sense of decency makes Furillo an unlikely noir protagonist.

Hill Street Blues was different - its narrative structure, texture, and politics suggested a new televison sensibility. Its success would allow for additional experimentation. One such experiment would be Miami Vice. Originally conceived as a kind of MTV cops by Anthony Yerkovich, who, not surprisingly, had written for Hill Street, Vice would often times ignore traditional plot mechanics. (Some critics argued that it ignored plot altogether.) Its texture, Pollan(1985) argues, was unmistakeable. It "brought a new visual sophistication to a medium that most of its history had been remarkably word bound." (p. 24) Finally, its politics moved the hero even farther from the conventionality of traditional television cops. If Vice is not quite classic film noir, it is very close.

The city setting of forties' and fifties' noir was either New York, Los Angeles, or a nameless city that looked like one of them. Each was

recognizable, each had changed as a result of World War II immigration. Walling (1980), discusses the connection between immigration and noir's social roots. He notes the results of the doubling of Los Angeles' black population during World War II: "Such a large scale phenomenon could not help but alter the psychological and moral terrain for anyone who already knew Los Angeles." (p. 44) In the eighties, Miami dealt with a similar racial change; immigrants came from Haiti, Columbia, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Over 100,000 came in the Cuban boatlift. Riots and drug wars added to the tension. Drug money created new wealth and new corruption. Noir's spirit could certainly exist in such a climate. Yerkovich further explains: "I read a statistic that said that one-third of the illegal revenues in the United States came out of South Florida. I wanted to explore the changes in a city that used to be a middle-class vacation land. Today, Miami is like an American Casablanca, and it's never really been seen on television." (Janeshutz and MacGregor, 1986, p. 12)

Visually, Miami's art deco architecture provides an ironic contrast to noir's pessimistic themes. Vice's Art Director, Jeffrey Hood described Miami's South Beach: "You get such an unbroken chain of buildings designed with the same spirit, the same utopian view. It's a world in which technology is going to solve all of our problems and give us leisure and satisfaction." (Janeshutz and MacGregor, p. 89) Miami Vice consistently uses exotic settings, their function is more than just as a backdrop. Sometimes, it appears, the plot is just an excuse for us to see the setting.

Schrader explains the connection between emphasis on setting and noir: "When the environment is given an equal or greater weight than the actor, it, of course, creates a fatalistic, hopeless mood." (p. 283)

The program's stylishness, ranging from its attention to the details of fashion and style to its visual sophistication would seem to work against the noir grain. Tailored suits, fancy sports cars, and glamorous settings shot in colors that in the first and second season "pop" (Pollan, p. 27) on the screen seemingly have little in common with the soiled trenchcoats and the dark, rainswept city streets of classic noir. But the importance is not in the particular clothing or specific location; rather, it is the attention to style that matters. As Schrader writes about classic noir: "Thus film noir's techniques emphasize loss, nostalgia, lack of clear priorities, insecurity; then submerge these self-doubts in mannerism and style. In such a world style becomes paramount; it is all that separates one from meaninglessness." (p. 285) (emphasis mine) For Miami Vice style is everything. Rob Cohen, director of the "Evan" and "Definitely Miami" episodes discussed later in this paper, makes the same point. After seeing the script for the "Definitely Miami" episode, "I realized from the start it was going to have to be a victory of style over substance." (Janeshutz and MacGregor, p. 189) Pollan points out that the director, cinematographer, editor, musical director, and costume designer are all higher on the Vice hierarchy than the writers. (p. 27) Shutz and MacGregor's paperback, The Making of Miami Vice (1986), devotes chapters to all of the above but ignores, save an occasional mention, the show's writers.

A Vice innovation that may also connect it to its noir roots is the rock music. The music serves a number of functions: the audio often advances the plot as dialogue might and sometimes the music serves to help the viewer interpret the image. Butler (1985) demonstrates that the music is just one of the "unconventional stylistic techniques" that "work against the classical narrative model." (p. 137) I would agree but also add that the music sometimes helps us to see the protagonists as noir men, particularly as they relate to women. Tuska writes at the beginning of his chapter on noir men:

> ... they must perform in order to be loved... Keeping women in their "place" means for men that they, too, must keep to their place: they must go it alone, with only the buddy system to sustain them: they cannot show too much emotion; above all, they must find the meaning of life in activity, never contemplation." (p. 215)

At least some of the rock music on Vice's soundtrack share and thus reinforce these values. Crockett and Tubbs, like most of their predecessors, relate to women only in adolescent, self-oriented sexual terms. For them, "Bang a Gong (Get It On)" by Power Station and "I Wanna Know What Love Is" by Foreigner says it all.

This emphasis on music and style at the expense of writing may make for a more sensory medium - it does, however, have its detractors. Much of the criticism of the series has focused on its lack of plot. For example, Elvis Mitchell, writing in Rolling Stone (March 27, 1986): "The absence of what's known in freshman English classes as story has not gone unnoticed." (p. 136) Pollan describes Vice as "a place where old-fashioned literary concerns - logic, plausibility, the whole bland business of cause and effect - don't seem to matter much." (p. 25) And most recently,

Roger Simon in TV Guide (March 21-27, 1987) asks: "Is there hope for Miami Vice ? Yes. Better writing, better storylines, and some relief from the suffocating sense of gloom would all help." (p. 28) But to lessen the emphasis on style would be to radically change the show. Like its predecessors, the films of the forties and fifties, it forces noir into "artistically invigorating twists and turns." (Schrader, p. 290) The remainder of this paper will focus on some of these twists and turns.

The use of the double or hero's reverse image is occasionally found in the early noir films. This person with whom the protagonist must come to terms shows up in Siodmark's The Killers (1946) for example. In the film, the Burt Lancaster character dies early on and the Edmund O'Brien character, investigating his death, comes to relive Lancaster's life, even getting revenge for him. (Kaminsky, 1974, p. 51) This close association with a double figure is found in a few of the period's films but seldom does it dominate plot, theme, or style. As noted earlier in this paper, the films of the period were influenced by Freudian psychology. Consequently, the films would not place nearly the emphasis on the double as later films more influenced by different psychological theories such as Carl Jung's, would. For Jung, the hero's shadow is represented "by the dark brother whom he must confront." (Steele, 1982, p. 305)

Miami Vice consistently makes use of the double - it may be the show's dominant motif. The plot often calls for Sonny Crockett and Ricardo Tubbs to go undercover. When they do, they become more than just cops masquerading as criminals. In many ways, they become the

criminals they chase. This connection between the vice cops and the criminals is noted by Sonny's ex-wife in the pilot for the series: "It's funny but in a lot of ways you and your vice cop buddies are just the flip side of the same coin from those dealers you're always masquerading around with. You're all players, Sonny, you get high on the action." Butler, in his article on Miami Vice and film noir, sees this relationship as being central to the purpose of the series: "I suggest that the core dilemma of Miami Vice is whether or not the police officers will surrender themselves to the world of vice. Each time they go undercover there is the implication that they might stay undercover."(p. 132)

Partners and ex-partners, dead or now working for the other side, further develop this motif. The vice cops can be placed on a continuum. On the dark side are the vice cops who have crossed over. On the other side are the less-than-innocent-but-not-yet-corrupted supporting cast officers. In the center is Crockett with Tubbs close by. (Crockett's dress, when compared with Tubb's, suggests that he is closer to the dark side.)

The pilot, for example, is about partners and ex-partners. The film opens with the death of Crockett's partner and then focuses on how Crockett and Tubbs become partners. Critical to the plot is the unmasking of Scotty, Crockett's former partner, who though working as a federal narcotics agent is actually an informer for Calderone, a notorious drug kingpin responsible for Crockett's partner's death.

From the first season, "Evan" closes with the image of Crockett between Tubbs and Evan, another ex-cop gone bad. (see figure 1) Crockett had hated Evan, he now reconciles with him. Crockett is situated between the good and evil cop worlds as Evan's dying words portend Sonny's future: "Now it's your turn, Sonny." (The show also has Gusman, an international arms dealer, deliver an archetypal noir line: "What is this world coming to when you can't trust the police to be honest.")

In the second season "Definitely Miami" not only further develops the double, it also combines it with an element of noir missing from Vice's first season - "the spider woman." Rob Cohen, the episode's director, later commented: "I saw this show as a kind of daytime film noir. I wanted to take the noir values and put them in the daylight." (Janeshutz and MacGregor, p. 189) The deadly, sexy seductress is first seen by Crockett as he and Tubbs wait on the beach for Clemente, a potential informer. The camera slowly pans across her body as we and Crockett watch her. (Butler's analysis of the first season argues that women only attract a "glance" rather than a "sustained gaze." Butler also notes the lack of a key noir character - "the sexy, duplicitous woman." (p. 132) The appearance of the "spider woman" and Sonny's voyeurism would thus seem to make Vice more consistent with traditional noir.) "I get these occasional urges for stability in my life," Sonny wisecracks while continuing to stare. Tubbs laughs: "You need to see someone about that." Tubbs knows Sonny's and his own nature too well. Callie, the spider woman, and Sonny flirt. Callie leaves. The next shot

is of Charlie, her husband Crockett's double - a dissonant chord suggests that he is dangerous.

The next day Sonny sees Callie again; only this time she is cool toward him. She doesn't want to get involved; she has a "bad husband... a bad marriage." His answer reflects his interest in her and also the noir hero's inability to escape his fate: "I'll help... do I have a choice ?" After a sexual encounter their discussion reveals that Callie understands Crockett and his sexual drives better than he does. Sonny, drawn by her sexual power, seems to understand very little of what is going on. The spider woman is clearly in control:

Callie: You own this place ?

Sonny: Some people I work with own it - they let me use it when I want.

Callie: Oh, I could make you that kind of deal.

Sonny: (laughs) I didn't bring you here to make a play, Callie.

Callie: No ?

Sonny: No.

Callie: What did you bring me here for, Sonny ? Conversation ?

Sonny: To get you away from a bad husband.

Callie: You really believe that ? You brought me back here for the same reason I came.

Sonny: ... You don't know me. You don't know what you're dealing with.

Callie: But of course I know you. I knew you from the very first moment I saw you.

Callie, according to Crockett is "in love" with Crockett's double, Sonny Burnett. She is also married to his evil double, Charlie. Crockett, like his noir predecessors, sees only a small part of the picture.

Callie later arranges a deal between Sonny and Charlie. The final sequences bring all of the noir elements together. The sequence opens with a long shot of Crockett's car going down the road to the beach rendezvous with his double. Goodly and Creme's "Cry" begins playing in the background. A slow dissolve brings another shot of the road; a third shot still another view. (see figures 2, 3, 4) The three combine and give us an incongruous mix of oblique and vertical lines - a characteristic of film noir. (Schrader, p. 283) On a bleached-out beach, Crockett's black sports car doubles with an identical black sports car and they form an oblique angle. (figure 5) Crockett confronts his double (figure 6) and in the shootout he kills him. For just a moment Crockett appears to realize that he has killed an extension of himself. The music continues as we shift to the secondary plot - the woman in the witness protection program has been killed.

The sequence returns to the beach where police search the sand piles for buried cars. (figure 7) The next scene shows the spider woman building little sand mounds. (figure 8) The mounds link this scene with the previous one. Callie looks up as a figure walks toward her. She smiles. (figure 9) The next shot is of the figure coming toward us. At first the long hair suggests that it is Charlie (figure 10), then it becomes Sonny. (figure 11) The double imagery on one level suggests the closeness of the characters - Sonny Crockett/Burnett is psychologically not far from his double - Charlie. On another level, we further understand Callie, the spider woman. Her smiling at both images signifies that it does not matter which has come back.

When Sonny reaches her she tells him about the white beaches they can go to: "So white, they'll hurt your eyes. So clear, so pure, so empty." At the hint of sex ("I can take you to places you never dreamed of."), Sonny puts on his sun glasses (figure 12) - perhaps to protect his eyes from the "bright shiny beaches" - or, more likely, her sexuality and her power. The police arrive and take her away. Sonny is left alone on the beach (figure 13) as the soundtrack continues to tell us his feelings: "... that's the sound of my love dying. You don't know how to ease my pain. You make me wanna cry ... You don't know how to play the game, you cheat and you lie. You make me wanna cry. Cry, You don't even know how to say good-by. Cry."

The ending recalls the ending of The Maltese Falcon in which Sam Spade sends the spider woman off to prison: "Sure I love you, but that's beside the point ... I'll have some rotten nights after I sent you over, but it will pass." (Schatz, p. 29) Sonny doesn't speak; the music conveys his feelings. She makes him want to cry but like Sam Spade and all of the rest of the noir heroes, he can't.

"Definitely Miami" uses the double primarily as a plot device and as a means to our better understanding of the character of Sonny Crockett. Importantly, we see the similarities between Sonny and his double; Sonny does not. In the confrontation, Sonny, for a moment, seems aware of what he has done. But this, like most other moments, passes without reflection. As noted earlier in this paper, this is consistent with the personality

of the noir hero; he seldom reflects, he never changes. While he must deal with a dissonant world, any dissonant feeling he may have are repressed. In Miami Vice's third season, "Shadow in the Dark" explores what happens when the noir protagonist is forced to respond to this dissonance.

The title "Shadow in the Dark" points us toward Jungian psychology. Carl Jung describes in Man and His Symbols (1964) what happens when the "eternal truths" or "collective images accepted by civilized societies" are ignored: "Such tendencies form an ever-present and potentially destructuve "shadow" to our conscious mind. Even tendencies that might in some circumstances be able to exert a beneficial influence are transformed into demons when they are repressed." (p. 93) In this episode, Sonny Crockett must deal with his own shadow; he must deal with demons that for too long have been repressed.

Jungian psychology can help to deepen our understanding of film noir. Later in the same essay, Jung points to the consequences of this repression:

> Our times have demonstrated what it means for the gates of the underworld to be opened. Things whose enormity nobody could have imagined in the idyllic harmlessness of the first decade of our century have turned our world upside down. Ever since, the world has remained in a state of schizophrenia. (p. 93)

This schizophrenia has always been a part of the noir outlook. Forties' noir only hinted at it; fifties' noir (when the hero goes"bananas") and more recently, Taxi Driver, Tightrope, and Blue Velvet (1986) deal more openly with it. In a larger sense, film noir can be seen as both a visual and thematic representation of this schizophrenic world. The noir hero, who constantly denies his shadow, fits in all-too-well.

Before examining "Shadow in the Dark" we need to look at Tightrope, a Clint Eastwood film that explores some of the same territory. Eastwood plays a detective who must confront his own "double" or evil twin. Set in contemporary New Orleans, the film uses the city to heighten its noir and double themes. Part of New Orleans looks like any other American city; symbols of progress - skyscrapers and crowded streets, mix with progress' flip side - slums and poverty. What makes New Orleans different is its dark shadow - most typified by the French Quarter section of the city. With its tawdriness, decadence, and hedonism, the French Quarter gives life to our shadow. New Orleans, perhaps like no other American city, forces us to confront it. (Not surprisingly, the city's most popular icon is either a black or white mask.)

The film opens with a murder - we see only the murderer's tennis shoes. The first shot of the Eastwood character is of his tennis shoes - visually connecting him with his double. Eastwood's attempt to capture the killer will force him to explore his own dark side particularly as it relates to his sexuality. Throughout the film, his good side (love of children, sense of duty) will be contrasted with his dark sexual side (sadism, bondage). When his double kills the same prostitute that he has just visited, Eastwood's character realizes that the killer is very close to him. In case the viewer misses this connection, a discussion with a psychologist explains it all:

psychologist: Has he contacted you ?

Wes (Eastwood's character): No.

psychologist: I wouldn't be surprised if he did.

Wes: Why ?

psychologist: Once you started going after him you became closer to him than anyone else ...

Wes: I'm not sure how close I want to get.

psychologist: There's a darkness inside all of us, Wes. You, me, and the man down the street. Some have it under control, others act it out, the rest of us try to walk a tightrope between the two.

The climax takes place during the Mardi Gras celebration with its masks and costumes and the final shootout in a nearby graveyard. Eastwood's cop kills his double, a former cop. This Eastwood character, unlike his Dirty Harry one, grows - he has dealt with his shadow.

"Shadow in the Dark" further explores Sonny Crockett's double, the shadow, the "dark brother whom he must confront." This confrontation is not just a physical one as it was in "Definitely Miami"; this time it is psychological and not without pain. As Jung explains in The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious (1959): "The shadow is a tight passage, a narrow door, whose painful constriction no one is spared who goes down the deep well." Jung continues his well metaphor: "It is the world of water, where all life floats in suspension; where the realm of the sympathetic system, the soul of everything living begins; where I am indivisibly this and that; where I experience the other in myself and the other-than-myself experiences me." (p. 21-22) Sonny Crockett will experience the other in himself (his double) as he experiences him.

"Shadow in the Dark" is very much in the film noir tradition. The psychological theme places it in the schizophrenic period of noir's development. Its look is very dark - at times, it even difficult to see

what is happening. Very few scenes occur in daylight and even they seem to have the color washed out of them. Vertical and obtuse lines dominate and shadows are everywhere. The two dream scenes contain no contextual clues that they are dreams until they are over suggesting that the world found in nightmares and the real world are the same. (The whole episode has a nightmarish quality to it.) The music is more traditional; the rock music is gone, replaced by an eerie, somber, understated score.

The plot concerns an unnamed burglar with bizarre tastes - flour, steaks, men's pants. Crockett and Tubbs are assigned to Gilmore who is obsessed with finding the burglar. Gilmore becomes psychotic; he is institutionalized. Sonny continues the investigation and he, too, becomes consumed with finding him. Sonny believes that the burglar is becoming more violent. As Sonny gets closer to the burglar, he, too, becomes more psychologically unstable. A suspect is brought in; Sonny argues that they have the wrong man. ("That ain't him.") Gilmore, from almost a catatonic state, helps him prove that this suspect is not their man. Sonny psychically determines where the burglar will strike next and once again, Gilmore confirms. Crockett, at the house, finds and then fights with the burglar. In the last sequence, the burglar is questioned and Sonny awakens from a bad dream.

The story makes extensive use of doubles linking Sonny with both the burglar and the psychotic cop. Sonny not only comes think like the burglar, he even begins to act like him. In the opening sequence, the burglar uses his hands as if he is miming. Later Sonny will similarly use his hands. In the opening, the burglar flours his face creating a clownlike mask.

Later Sonny sits in front of a mirror and applies powder to his face. Both physically and psychologically, Sonny draws closer to his double/shadow. In Jung's terms, Sonny has gone "down to the deep well" to experience the "other in himself." (Jung in The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious further connects the shadow with an archetype called the "trickster." The description and function of this archetypal character (see pages 255 to 289) supports an interesting Jungian interpretation of this episode.)

In previous episodes, Sonny doubled with a cop who had crossed over to the other side of the law. In "Shadow in the Dark," Sonny doubles with a cop who goes over the psychological edge. Early in the episode, Crockett, Tubbs, and Gilmore visit an ex-burglar for questioning. The scene has them meeting at center stage with the man to be questioned. Tubbs then moves downstage, Gilmore upstage, to form Vice's double motif. (figure 14) (Interestingly, the characters appear self-conscious in their movement - almost as if they understand their relative psychological position.) Gilmore, although he has already seemed unstable, first "goes bananas" in this scene. Ironically, the more unstable Gilmore becomes, the more Sonny must depend upon him to prove that he is not wrong and he is not going crazy.

The climax brings the noir, double, and Jungian themes together. Crockett intuits where the burglar will strike next - like his noir predecessors, he seldom solves a crime logically or deductively. His cop double, though in a near-catatonic state, agrees. At the house, Sonny's confrontation with his double unleashes a physical fury seldom seen on the program. Even the woman of the house becomes frightened as she reacts to Sonny's emerging

dark side. Before she becomes hysterical, Sonny regains his cop persona. As the burglar is led away he laughs and says to Sonny who now has the burglar's white make-up on his face: "You live with me, don't you." The next shot further connects the two characters. Sonny stands under a light as the burglar is put into the police cruiser. The shot frames Sonny with his double. (figure 15) In the next scene the burglar is being questioned while Sonny and Castillo listen in the next room. A stark close-up of the burglar's face (figure 16) becomes the face of Sonny as the burglar looks away. (figure 17) Suddenly the burglar hurls something foward. It breaks the glass/mirror (figure 18) and then Sonny awakens from what appears to be a dream. Sonny has physically and psychologically confronted his double.

In "Shadow in the Dark," Sonny Crockett takes a step, uncharacteristic for the noir hero, toward understanding his double/shadow and thus understanding himself. One episode does not make a season but the character of Sonny Crockett in other third-season episodes does seem more reflective. The third season of Miami Vice is different from the previous seasons - the texture is much darker, the colors that "pop" are gone, and the supporting cast has become more important. Its most interesting development, however, may be the subtle changes occurring in the character of the noir protagonist, Sonny Crockett. The noir movement may be in a new period of "artistically invigorating twists and turns."

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figure 1

figure 2

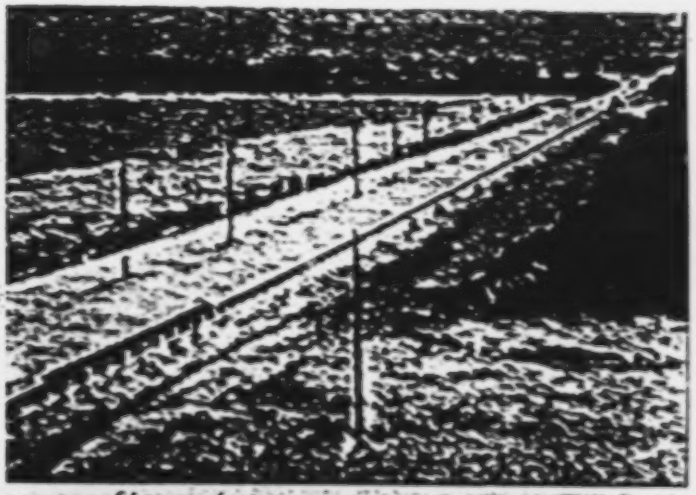

figure 3

figure 4

figure 5

figure 6

figure 7

figure 8

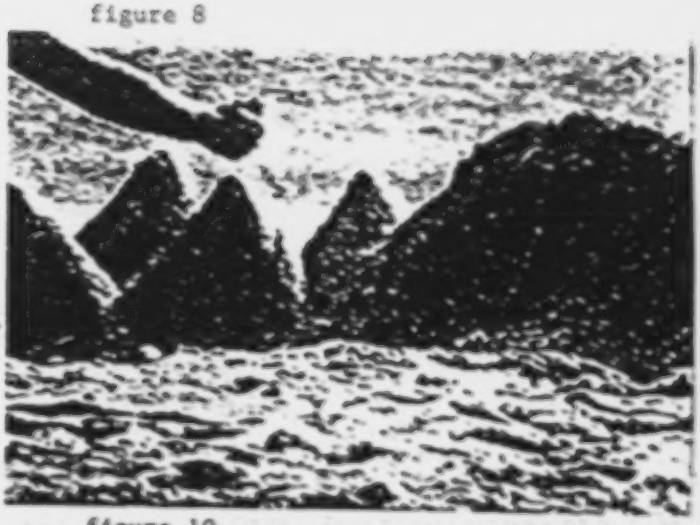

figure 9

figure 10

figure 11

figure 12

figure 13

figure 14

figure 15

figure 16

figure 17

figure 18